

FAO RESPONSE

The FAO thanks the Government of Canada for the comments provided on agenda item 5 and acknowledges the important contribution of the aquaculture sector to the economy of Canada.

The FAO Secretariat thanks Canada for endorsement of the report of the tenth Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture held in Trondheim, Norway, from 23 to 27 August 2019.

FAO takes note of Canada's interest in *The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* Report and the kind offer to review the draft Global Plan of Action for Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

The FAO appreciates Canada's interest in implementation of the FAO Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) 2016-2020 and looks forward to Canada's engagement in FAO's AMR Action Plan for 2021-2025, recognizing the importance of understanding risks and impacts in the context of the AMR Action Plan and the potential for harmonized consensus of epidemiological cut-off values.

FAO acknowledges Canada's welcoming of the development of the Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture (GSA), and the FAO Secretariat is pleased to provide a written update on a more detailed roadmap and methodology, as requested:

The findings of the Expert Consultation on the Development of Sustainable Aquaculture Guidelines, Rome, Italy, 17-20 June 2019 were presented to the 10th Session of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture.^{1,2} This Expert Consultation identified the components of the GSA as:

- Component 1: Pathways towards successful implementation of sustainable aquaculture in different regional contexts, based on case studies of accomplishments in similar settings or regions;
- Component 2: A series of practical thematic modules describing the rationale and attributes for approaches and practices on each specific topic, the existing guidelines and the key recommendations for successful implementation and capacity development, based on the achievements and difficulties highlighted by case studies;
- Component 3: A series of case studies describing the process, the accomplishment and the constraints, to illustrate the possible pathways and thematic factsheets.

Following discussions and recommendations from Members of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture (COFI/AQ) in 2019, FAO launched regional consultative processes on the development of the GSA.

The regional GSA consultations included a presential meeting over two consecutive days in Bamako, Mali in 2019 and during three hours sessions in three consecutive days in a virtual format in two subsequent meetings in Asia and in Latin America in 2020:

¹ COFI:AQ/X/2019/8 www.fao.org/3/na137en/na137en.pdf

² COFI:AQ/X/2019/Inf.8 www.fao.org/3/na410en/na410en.pdf

- The African Regional Consultation on Development of the Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture was held in Bamako, Mali from 29 to 30 November 2019. The meeting report is available online;³
- The Asian Regional Consultation on Development of the GSA was held virtually from 30 November to 2 December 2020. The meeting report is under preparation;
- The Latin American Regional Consultation on the Development of GSA was held virtually from 9 to 11 December 2020. The meeting report is under preparation.

The objectives of the regional consultations were/are:

- Share current policies and practices related to aquaculture in the region to inform GSA, currently under development by the FAO Secretariat;
- Review existing regional sustainable aquaculture guidance that has been developed and assess if there are gaps that the GSA could help fill;
- Develop a list of priority thematic modules, both those of regional strength and those that are regional challenges;
- Propose case studies from the countries in their regions.

Based on consultations so far, the forthcoming activities are planned:⁴

- Independent case studies selection panel from February to May 2021;
- The Pacific and Caribbean Regional Consultation on Development of GSA from 23 to 25 February 2021;
- The Near East and North Africa Regional Consultation on Development of GSA from 16 to 18 March 2021;
- The Europe Regional Consultation on Development of GSA in March 2021;
- The Central Asia Regional Consultation on Development of GSA in March 2021;
- The North America Regional Consultation in April 2021;
- Writing a draft GSA from June to September 2021;
- The second global Expert Consultation to review the draft GSA in August 2021;
- The final GSA draft will be submitted to 11th Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture for its review, guidance and adoption, as applicable, in Mexico, November 2021;
- The draft GSA will be presented to the 35th Session of COFI for guidance and endorsement, as applicable (July 2022).

³ FAO. 2020. Report of Regional Consultation on the development of Guidelines of Sustainable Aquaculture (GSA), Bamako, Mali, 29-30 November 2019. Fisheries and Aquaculture Report No. 1319. Rome. www.fao.org/3/cb0280en/CB0280EN.pdf

⁴ Please note that dates for the virtual regional consultations are tentative and subject to agreement with the Regions.